THE

CHRISTIAN BISHOP

APPROVING HIMSELF UNTO GOD,

IN REFERENCE TO THE PRESENT STATE

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA;

A SERMON

PREACHED IN CHRIST CHURCH IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,

ON THURSDAY, THE 25TH DAY OF OCTOBER, A. D. 1827,

AT THE

CONSECRATION

OF THE

RIGHT REV. HENRY U. ONDERDONK, D. D.

AS ASSISTANT BISHOP

OF THE

Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Pennsylvania.

BY JOHN HENRY HOBART, D. D.

BISHOP OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

PHILADELPHIA:

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1827

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Philadelphia, October 26, 1827.

RIGHT REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

THE very able exposition, given by you yesterday, of the constitution of the church, and the duties of its ministers; the feeling and impressive eulogium upon the character of the venerable Bishop of this diocese; and the forcible testimony borne to the merits of the gentleman, whom we are about to receive as our spiritual friend and father, will all remain deeply impressed upon the minds of those who had the good fortune to hear them. But a large portion of the episcopal community must continue without the advantage which your auditors enjoyed, unless the discourse, which you pronounced, is preserved and disseminated. We, therefore, beg leave to trespass on you with the request that you will furnish a copy for publication. At a time when the peace of the church is actively assailed, and every effort is required for the preservation of its principles, it is impossible to appreciate too highly the fearless and unanswerable defence for which it is indebted to you.

We have the honour to be

Your faithful friends and servants,

N. CHAPMAN,
WILLIAM BELL,
ROB. E. GRIFFITH,
HOR. BINNEY,
J. R. INGERSOLL.

Rt. Rev. Bishop Hobart.

Philadelphia, October 27, 1827.

GENTLEMEN,

I CANNOT but be gratified by the approbation of my sermon, expressed by those whose talents and influence have been so beneficially exerted in defence of their church, and of the principles and views of their Diocesan, so eminently worthy of confidence, veneration, and of love. I know of no reason for refusing a request for the publication of a sermon, which was delivered in the humble hope of its aiding, in some measure, the good cause in which you are so honourably and zealously engaged. The discourse is, therefore, committed to your disposal.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Very faithfully and respectfully,

Your obedient friend and servant,

J. H. HOBART.

To N. Chapman, M. D.
William Bell,
Robert E. Griffith,
Hor. Binney,
J. R. Ingersoll, Esqrs.

SERMON.

Study to show thyself approved unto God.
2 *Tim.* ii. 15.

THERE is no principle, which, under all circumstances, and in every situation, can effectually resist the seductions and assaults that would lure and force us from our duty, and which can preserve us in the firm and undeviating discharge of it, but that which habitually and deeply recognises the authority of a supreme lawgiver, the tribunal of an Almighty Judge; and which acknowledges, in that authority, the highest claim and motive to obedience, and anticipates from that tribunal the final plaudit of eternal reward. Other views may come in aid of this paramount sentiment. But worldly in their origin, and worldly in their ends, they must prove weak when more powerful worldly considerations impel us; they must yield against that host of worldly temptations, which so often interpose present gratification between us and our duty. To show ourselves approved unto God—that God who has imposed on us

his rightful dominion, who now sees and records our most secret conduct, and who, from his judgment seat, will finally award us never-ending bliss or wo—this is that divine principle, which, fixing all the powers, sentiments and views of our being on the awful and unchanging scenes of a future existence, raises us above the comparatively unimportant and the evanescent scenes of this little point of duration. Seating us in eternity, it gives us, in every situation, and under all circumstances, the pure and inflexible devotedness of its holy denizens.

If this then be the principle which should be urged on men in all their temporal connexions, as that which alone can secure a consistent and persevering course of obedience, with how much greater force may it be pressed on those who have the guardianship of the spiritual interests of mankind; with whom is entrusted the cure, the awful cure of souls; and who, in some measure, hold in their hands the destiny of immortal beings? And most of all, with what emphatic, with what deep earnestness may it be held forth, as the supreme principle which, amidst the numerous trials of their course of duty, should animate, control, and comfort those, who, unworthy and feeble as they may be, have yet received the high commission to direct and rule under the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, all orders of men in his spiritual fold of life and salvation.

To every christian Bishop, there is no command more solemn, none which he should press to his soul with a more devoted and holy purpose, than that which the

great apostle delivered to Timothy of Ephesus, when he communicated to him those powers of ordination and government, which every christian bishop successively receives, and will receive to the end of the world. "Study to show thyself approved unto God."

And if—in the wide spread branches of the church catholic, under all their varying circumstances, whether of splendour or of gloom, of elevation or depression, of tumult or of calm, to show themselves approved unto their divine Lord and Master is the only correct and the only safe aim of those whom he has called to serve him in the highest stations of his church militant—numerous and peculiar are the circumstances in our own church, some of them subjects of congratulation, many of heartfelt grief, which render this the most important sentiment that can be urged on him who is now to be called to the work and ministry of a Bishop in our branch of the church of Christ.

Through a course of episcopal duty almost equalling the whole amount of the periods of his sons in the episcopacy, how conspicuously and pre-eminently has this principle distinguished him who presides among us, our venerable father. With infirmity, indeed, but with earnestness of desire, I trust those who have received from him the episcopal authority, have sought to make this holy principle their guide in the various momentous, and often perplexing emergencies of their official course. Will, then, my long known and long deeply valued friend, whom we are soon to receive among us

as a brother in the episcopacy, permit me to say, not more, indeed, for his admonition than for my own,

"Study to show thyself approved unto God," *in the faithful discharge of duty, as demanded by the particular circumstances and exigencies of our church.*

1. In faithfully preaching the *distinguishing doctrines of the gospel.*

For a failure in so doing is one of those charges which, from whatever motive, is often urged against a portion at least of the Bishops and Clergy of our church. Wo, indeed, be to them if they thus neglect to teach and to enforce those vital doctrines, which alone can give efficacy to the Gospel as a divine plan for the salvation of mankind. But in ascertaining the mode by which he is to avoid this censure, and escape this wo, and to exhibit the faith as once delivered to the saints, the Bishop of our church will be influenced by other considerations than those with which human applause can flatter, or human censure intimidate. These would often lead to extreme opinions, as variant from the plain tenets of our church, and from the declarations of the gospel unadulterated by the alloy of human systems, as they are from the plain dictates of reason and the strongest feelings of our nature. No love of applause, as the advocate of what is miscalled liberal and rational christianity; and no fear of censure for opposing what, by a strange anomaly, are sometimes distinguished as the doctrines of grace; will prompt him, on the one hand, to make man, the gold of

whose nature has become dim, as bright and pure as when his maker's image was impressed on his soul; nor, on the other, to degrade that image, in native hatred of God and goodness, to the likeness of a fiend, and so to bind man in the chains of his corrupt passions, as to fix his crimes and his final perdition on the God of purity and boundless goodness. On the one hand, he will not wrest from the divine justice its sceptre, and from the divine government its sanctions, by extending pardon to sin without the vindication of that offended justice, or reparation to that insulted government; nor, on the other, limit that atonement to God's violated justice and sovereignty, which is more than of value for the salvation of millions of worlds, to but a small portion of the ruined race who require it. On the one hand, he will not represent man's powers and affections as standing in no need of the invisible and incomprehensible but transforming power of supernatural grace; nor, on the other, will he exhibit this spiritual death unto sin, and new birth unto righteousness, as effected but by the application of human reason and human resolution, guided and sanctified by the influences of the divine spirit, secretly but powerfully dispensed in the use of moral means and external pledges. Presenting the fundamental doctrines of original corruption, of divine atonement, of spiritual renovation in the genuine aspects in which fact and inspiration exhibit them, not accommodated to that pride of reason which would entirely destroy their lineaments, nor to that false and extravagant zeal which would distort them by the revolting and disgusting features of fanaticism, he may not, indeed, secure the applause, he may not avoid the censure of men; he may be spoken

against by some as an enthusiast, or by others as a formalist; but he will have "approved himself to God."

A paramount regard to this approbation will guide him,

2. In exhibiting the church in its divinely *constituted ministrations and ordinances* as the mean and pledge of salvation to the faithful.

In uniting us to a visible society, for the purpose of redeeming us from the corruptions of our evil nature and of the world, and for training us for the purity and bliss of a celestial and eternal existence, the Divine Author of our being has not only exercised that sovereign power which makes us in all things dependent on his will, but has mercifully accommodated himself to the social principle which so strongly characterizes us. This, uniform and powerful in its influence, prompts us in *spiritual* as in temporal matters, to mingle with our fellow men our thoughts, our feelings, our pursuits, our hopes. Most conversant as we are, too, with material objects, and most affected by them, what an aid to our conception of spiritual truths, what an excitement to our hopes of spiritual blessings, when they are exhibited as conveyed and pledged by external symbols. Hence the doctrine that the ministrations and ordinances of the church are the means and pledges of salvation to the faithful, to all true believers, is not more enforced by the plainest declarations of sacred writ, than it is conformable to a rational and philosophical view of our nature.

That the church is the body of that divine Lord who gave himself for it, that as members of this body true believers are united in him its head, and thus partake of his fulness of mercy and grace, are truths of the divine word too frequently and too strongly set forth to be denied. But though not denied, how much are they neglected! How much decried, how obviously and contemptuously branded are all researches as to the mode by which, in this divine body of the Redeemer, power is to be derived to minister in its holy concerns, to dispense its ordinances! And yet, in this spiritual and divine society, no man can minister unless he be called of God by a commission visibly conferred for that purpose; and there can be no commission which is not derived from that Almighty Head of this mystical body, who only possesses all spiritual power, and who, vesting with his apostles the authority of conferring the right of ministering in holy things, pronounced the infallible promise, that this authority should be perpetuated "even to the end of the world." The Bishop of our church on these subjects may prudently and mildly enforce opinions which boast, in more modern times, of the support of some of the most distinguished names in learning and theology, and which, before papal corruption obscured and deformed them, ranked among their advocates the noble army of martyrs, and the goodly fellowship of apostles. He may enforce them with a spirit which embraces, within the wide spread arms of charity, the sincere and the pious of every name and of every nation, and yet he must not expect the applauses of an age which is rapidly exchanging the ancient landmarks of divine order for

those of its own planting; and which, displacing the one apostolic church with a ministry and institutions derived from its divine founder, seeks to erect one in which human caprice and human power appoint and model. He must not hope for the *attention* of an age thus disposed. Well will it be, if he escapes its loud and condemning denunciations. But he will have the consolation which springs from a source that human denunciation cannot alloy—he is studying to approve himself to God.

Under the predominating influence of the same sentiment, he will explain and defend,

3. The *authority of the church*, extending its full and unrestricted power to all matters not settled by divine prescription, which fall within the sphere of the apostolic precepts, let every thing be done to edification, decently and in order.

Submission to the will of the church, legitimately expressed by its constituted authorities, not violating the plain prescriptions of the moral law, nor the positive determinations of the word of God, must know no limits. Resistance in such cases would substitute individual pleasure for public will, and would introduce disorder and misrule into that spiritual society, whose essential characteristics are subordination and unity; and, utterly incompatible with the humble and mild spirit of the christian, must be most hateful in the sight of that divine Lord, whose prayer it was that his followers "might be one, always keeping the unity of the

spirit in the bond of peace." Things indifferent, when thus enacted, and such are all things not plainly enjoined by reason, by conscience, or by the divine law, assume the awful force of the highest moral obligation. To the prescriptions of the divinely constituted church concerning them when lawfully legislating, may be applied with even more solemnity than to the inferior matters of human polity—"he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." In this view, how imperious the duty of the bishop of our church to enforce and maintain her in the exercise of her legitimate powers, mindful of his solemn engagement at his consecration, which binds him to do so, and studying supremely to be approved of God.

4. And it is equally his obvious duty to explain and defend the particular mode by which our own church exerts her authority in its legislative, executive, and judiciary departments; by which is meant her *government*, as distinct from the constitution of her ministry.

For it is a distinction, in various respects, of the utmost importance, that separates the *orders of the ministry*, which, of divine appointment, are in their nature unchangeable; and the *government*, or the particular mode of the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, which, except as to certain divine powers of the ministry, may and does vary in various episcopal churches. It is the theoretic, though, unfortunately, through the operation of causes beyond her control, not the practical principle of the revered church to whom we owe our origin,

that the assent of all the orders affected by her laws whether of faith, of worship, of discipline, or of policy should be requisite to their validity. In her constitution, the laity in parliament, and the bishops and clergy in convocation, establish her enactments. Bodies, very discrepant, are thus associated; the one solely ecclesiastical, the other the great omnipotent political legislature of the nation. Our own church carries into effect the same principle in a much wiser mode; calling into her general ecclesiastical council her bishops, her clergy, and her laity, with co-ordinate powers of legislation; thus distributing among *all* the information and the views of *each*, and banishing, as far as human arrangements can banish, the deleterious influence of secular passions and secular policy on the church of God.

In some matters specially pertaining to theology, and in others, from their peculiar means of observation, and from no other causes, the opinions of the clergy, and especially of the bishops, may deserve particular deference. But in all, the voice of the laity, who are to be equally affected by ecclesiastical legislation, speaks with equal authority; and in some, the deference, which, in other cases, they would yield to the co-ordinate members of the legislative body, ought to be readily paid to their opinions and counsels. For that feature of our constitution, which gives them this co-ordinate power, and from which hitherto the results have, in many cases, been most happy, we are not a little indebted to

the wisdom and foresight of the venerable father,* whose agency was so considerable in the first organization of our church. And I hope I may be permitted to state, as evidence that my own strong attachment to this characteristic of our government has not been suddenly excited, that at the very commencement of my ministerial course in my own diocese, near thirty years since, I resisted a well meant but injudicious attempt to expunge from its constitution the provision which associates the laity with the bishop and clergy, in matters of legislation.

5. Another pleasing part of the particular duty of a bishop of our church, is, his illustrating and maintaining the *accordance*, in all important points, of our *ecclesiastical government* with the *civil constitutions* of our country.

In the *permanent* official stations of the bishops and clergy in her legislative bodies, our own church resembles all other religious communities, whose clergy also are permanent legislators. But, in some respects, she is more conformed than they are to the organization of our civil governments. Of these it is a characteristic, that legislative power is divided between two branches. And it is a peculiar character of our own church, that her legislative assembly is thus divided. Again, a single responsible executive characterizes our civil constitutions. The same feature marks our own church,

* The Right Rev. Bishop White, of Pennsylvania.

in the single episcopal executive in each diocese, cho sen, in the first instance, by the clergy and the repre sentatives of the laity. Nor are these the only point in which the bishop of our church may feel pleasure i asserting the free and republican constitution of ou government. For in *our* ecclesiastical judicatorie only, do the representatives of the laity possess stric co-ordinate authority—the power of voting as a separat body, and of annulling, by a majority of votes, the act of the Bishops and clergy.

The circumstances of the times render the frequen exposition of the particular genius of our ecclesiastica government an important and necessary duty. Fo churchmen, and especially high churchmen, (in whic term, in this country, there is no meaning, except a denoting a *high* attachment to the *distinguishin principles of our church*,) are often misconceived o misrepresented as friendly to arbitrary principles. I is not so. Identified as our church is, in all essentia matters of faith, ministry, and worship, with th Church of England, would it be fair, would it be hon ourable, to impute to the former all the obnoxiou *secular* features of the latter? And, identified as th churchmen and the high churchmen of our country ar with those of England, only, in decidedly maintainin the genuine and distinguishing *spiritual* principles o their respective churches, it is not fair, it is not honour able, to impute to the former the odious political prin ciples and measures, which, at certain times, have distinguished the latter.

6. Passing from the faith, the ministry, the authority, and the government of the church, to its *worship*, I need scarcely insist on the obvious and pressing duty of the Bishop of our church *sacredly to guard it*.

For singular, and, I must say, alarming is its situation. Not a voice, indeed, is heard, but in its praise. Language pours forth her warmest but not exaggerated encomiums on the spirituality and richness of its matter, on the simplicity and pathos of its style, on the beauty of its parts, and the impressiveness of its structure, on its unequalled tendency to guard the faith, to elevate the devotion of the christian. Dearer appear all its features, as they shine forth with a lustre and a strength exalted and increased by age. And yet while many an unlicensed hand deals with this general object of affection as caprice, or as prejudice, or as real or supposed exigency may dictate, and even deforms it by the mixture of extemporaneous effusions, the arm of legal authority must not even reverently approach it, to save it from the rude assaults that must sooner or later weaken its salutary influence, if not diminish the esteem and confidence in which it is held. Well does it behove every friend to this first of human books, and especially of every Bishop, whose province it is especially to guard it, to consider by what methods it is to be secured, the pride and blessing of churchmen now, their pride and blessing to the latest generations.

The numerous objections with which, in times past, the contracted spirit of prejudice assailed it, have

vanished before the enduring lustre of its unrivalled excellencies; and no plea for mutilating it is urged, but its length. Seek, then, to remove the objection, whether real or feigned, by abridging, without giving up any of its parts or materially changing their characters, and then claim for it an inviolable observance. This ultimately must be secured for it. This is demanded by the exalted value of the liturgy, by the voice of the church which enjoins it. And the agency which the bishops of the church must necessarily exercise in this momentous matter, they must perform independently of a regard to any human considerations, and studying to show themselves approved unto God.

7. But among the numerous duties of the Bishop, there is no one in which a single view to the approbation of his Lord and Master should more powerfully sway him, than in *admitting to the ministry.*

He will guard this sacred service from those who would approach it with aims merely secular, whether as one mode of procuring a settlement in life, or as an honourable and literary profession; who would approach it, declaring that they are moved by the Holy Ghost, while yet they are strangers to his transforming power on their hearts producing all christian virtues. He will save such from awful impiety to God, from the perdition which they invoke on their own souls.

But, in our own country, where many shades are thrown over the secular attractions which may invite

to the cure of souls, these are not the principal dangers to which, under present circumstances, our church is exposed. Her Bishops must guard a service which requires for its arduous duties, talents, attainments, industry, zeal, from the unadvised approach of the weak, the ignorant, the indolent, or the lukewarm. But there are those who will present themselves for the service of our altars, with pretensions which, in all the particulars which have been mentioned, will stand the test of human scrutiny, but with the purpose, secret or avowed, of mixing with its primitive doctrines the dogmas of modern theology; of superseding, on many occasions of worship, its liturgy and its ministers by the extemporaneous effusions of unordained men; thus changing the character of our church, and assimilating it, in a greater or less degree, to religious opinions and practices, which her institutions disallow and condemn. And the object of these daring innovations is, to infuse the heat and warmth of what they call evangelical piety into what they consider as at present lifeless forms. But these forms are too intimately connected with the blessed truths which animate them; too dear to many, I trust very many, as the best legacy of the ages that are past, as the best gift of apostolic and primitive times; and history and observation read too powerful a lesson of the deterioration of all that is valuable in divine truth, and interesting in genuine piety, that attended their demolition and subversion, to admit of viewing any assault upon them, but with the holy purpose of repelling it. At the outset, it could be repelled by excluding from the ministry of our church all who, notwithstanding the

most solemn promise of conformity to her worship and institutions, we have reason to fear would mould them to their pleasure, with the purpose, indeed, which, alas, has cloaked the foulest designs, the promoting the glory of God, and the good of souls. Painful as may be the repulsion of such from the ministry, and expose as it will the Bishop who discharges this duty, to much of worldly remark, reproach, and censure, all good men who regard consistency and honesty, all good churchmen who love their church, will applaud the firmness that discharges the duty; and surely it will be approved of God. This approbation will be his aim—

8. In the exercise of *discipline.*

The discipline of punishment, expelling the unworthy from the ministry, the Bishop can seldom discharge, but through the instrumentality and aid of others in the preparatory steps of presentation and trial. The discipline of exhortation and private admonition, in which his own judgment and conscience must solely guide him, important and salutary as it often may be, will still expose him, pure as may be his motives, kindly his demeanor, and prudent his conduct, to those misconceptions and unfriendly feelings, with which the infirmity of our selfish nature sometimes repays the exhortation or admonition which unfeignedly aims at its good. It is especially at such periods, when his kindest aims and his most benevolent purposes are misconceived or thwarted, that the christian Bishop will

feel the value of the consciousness that he seeks to be approved of his God.

9. Under the influence of this sentiment, does he affectionately and solicitously *watch over his diocese.*

Rejoicing in the joys, mourning in the sorrows of his clergy; sharing their cares, and animating their labours; and especially exciting them, by catechetical instruction of the young, by "exhortations public and private to all within their cure, to bring them to such ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left for error in religion or viciousness of life." As the spiritual overseer of his diocese, to guard every part of it from the contagion of error; as the watchman upon its walls, to give notice of spiritual danger, he will not only diligently seek to "banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word," and warn against all practices that tend to weaken and subvert that ministry and worship which he has promised to advance, but will both "privately and openly call upon and encourage others to do the same." Scattered as are the congregations of our church among religious communities, differing essentially from her in various matters of doctrine, of the christian ministry and worship, it must be evident that they are exposed to peculiar assaults upon their principles, and that peculiar vigilance is necessary in their Bishop to warn them of the approach of danger. Thus commending himself to them as their faithful guardian, he will have the strongest claim on their affection and their support; and should he fail to receive these, he will still enjoy the consolatory hope that he shall be approved of God.

The hope of this approbation will often be his principal support while he discharges his duty to his church,

10. In condemning *popular practices which tend to subvert her institutions, and to injure the cause of rational and fervent piety.**

Among the most prominent of these, are those meetings of private christians, in which unordained men successively engage in extemporaneous prayer and exhortations. Most solicitous, indeed, should be the Bishop of our church to encourage those habits of devotion, that communion with God in prayer and praise and thanksgiving, which only can excite and cherish in the soul the christian graces, and produce that heavenly mindedness which secures from the corruptions, while it exalts all the virtuous enjoyments of the world. And he will, therefore, earnestly exhort, not only to a constant and sincere participation in those public morning and evening prayers, for which the church has provided the fervent and sublime formularies of the Book of Common Prayer; not only to those family devotions, for which, also, the church has set forth forms, and to which the prayers of the liturgy may be adapted; but to private supplication, thanksgiving and praise in the closet; and to ejaculatory devotions at all times and in all places, in the crowded resort of business, or of worldly enjoyment, as well as in the secluded walks of retired life. The christian, who is "instant" in pious

* From the length of the sermon, this head and the following one were omitted in the delivery.

reading, meditation, and public and private devotion, will find every holy disposition and grace strengthened in his soul, and raising it above the corruptions and temptations of an evil world; and he will exhibit a piety fervent and lively, rational, humble, consistent, and enduring. He will not need the fictitious aids of those social meetings, which, well meant as they may sometimes be, and edifying as in some cases and to a certain extent they may for a time, prove, are generally, and from the constitution of human nature, almost necessarily, the theatres in which spiritual pride, ambition and ostentation indulge their unhallowed aims, and excite those violent emotions of animal sensibility, which discourage instead of inviting the presence of the meek, the mild, the humble graces of the Spirit. That this representation of the lamentable tendency of these associations is not the calumny of the cold formalist, and the enemy of vital godliness, is incontestibly proved by the testimony of some, who, in the estimation of the advocates of these associations, stand highest in the ranks of evangelical piety.*

* The testimonies of *Scott*, the popular commentator, of *Newton* of Olney, of *Robinson* of Leicester, of Bishop *Heber* of Calcutta, of the excellent *editor of the Christian Observer*, are recorded against these prayer meetings.

"Both Mr. Newton and the elder Mr. Scott, had given countenance to the associations, found on experience to be detrimental. Of the species of religious exercises spoken of, Mr. Scott, the father, says; 'Two or three effects were undeniable; first, they proved hot-beds, on which superficial and discreditable preachers were hastily raised up; who, going forth on the Lord's day to the neighbouring parishes, intercepted those who used to attend Mr.

At the very first view of these associations, they must appear utterly repugnant to the genius of our church, and to her positive institutions. It is her cha-

Newton. Secondly, men were called to pray in public, whose conduct afterwards brought a deep disgrace on the Gospel. Thirdly, they produced a captious, criticising, self-wise spirit, so that even Mr. Newton himself could seldom please them. Fourthly, they rendered the people so contemptuously indifferent to the worship of God and the Church, and many of them to any public worship in which they did not take a part, that I never before or since witnessed any thing like it.' There are other passages to the same effect." Scott's Life, p. p. 306, 307.

"Most persons," observes the editor of the Christian Observer, the Rev. Mr. Wilkes, in his work entitled "Correlative Claims and Duties," "who are versed in the religious history of the last few years, can bear record, that the tendency to deterioration is more rapid in societies of this kind, than in almost any other. Self-conceit, ostentation, jealousy, party-spirit, a love of gossiping and interference, and sometimes perhaps detraction, and even worse evils, are too apt to insinuate themselves into these societies."

With respect to such societies, and to all unions with other denominations for religious instruction and devotion, the opinions of the recent and much lamented Bishop Heber, of Calcutta, should have the greatest weight.

"*There are other inconveniences and improprieties incidental to what are usually called Prayer Meetings, which have led to their rejection by the great majority of the Church of England;* and, among the rest, by some excellent men, whom the conduct pursued by those with whom their chief intimacies lay would have naturally inclined to favour them. I mean, among others, the late Mr. *Scott* of Aston Sandford, and the late Mr. *Robinson* of St. Mary's, Leicester. Such is the practice reprobated by the

racteristic to do "all things decently and in order." She therefore regulates, by the collected wisdom and piety of public authority, the devotions of her members; and prevents any from the public performance of prayer or exhortation, who are not commissioned by those who have received authority for this purpose. But what security is there for decency and order, where, as the judicious Hooker observes, "each man's private spirit and gift is the only Bishop that ordaineth him to this ministry."* Our church provides, even "where two or three

apostle, of a number of persons coming together, with each his psalm, his prayer, his exhortation; the effect of which is not only often confusion, but, what is worse than confusion—*self-conceit* and *rivalry*, each labouring to excel his brother in the choice of his expressions and the outward earnestness of his address—and the bad effects of emulation mixing with actions, in which, of all others, humility and forgetfulness of self are necessary. Such, too, is that *warmth of feeling and language, derived rather from imitation than conviction*, which, under the circumstances which I have mentioned, are apt to degenerate into *enthusiastic excitement or irreverent familiarity.*"

* The whole passage is so weighty and forcible, that it is here inserted. "To him who considers the grievous and scandalous inconveniences whereunto they make themselves daily subject, with whom any blind and secret corner is judged a fit house of common prayer; the manifold *confusion* which they fall into, where every man's *private spirit and gift*, as they term it, is the only Bishop that ordaineth him to this ministry; the irksome *deformities* whereby through endless and senseless effusions of indigested prayers, they, who are subject to no certain order, but pray both *what and how they list*, oftentimes disgrace, in most insufferable manner, the worthiest part of Christian duty towards God; to him, I say, who weigheth duly all these things, the reasons cannot be obscure, why God doth in public prayer so much

are gathered together in God's name," a form of praye to guide and regulate their devotions; she justifies thi prescription by the authority of Scripture and of primi tive usage, and fortifies it by the unanswerable argu ments, that thus the matter and the language of he prayers are secured from erroneous doctrine and fro exceptionable expressions; and the enlightened an orderly devotion of the people, rendered such as thei understanding and their hearts approve, and as is fit t be offered to the majesty of Heaven and of earth. D her prescriptions, founded on Scripture and primitiv usage, lose their force, or these arguments their effic cy, when the congregation is diminished in number, c the place of devotion changed from the consecrate sanctuary to the private apartment, or the more publi lecture room? Alas! plain and conclusive as are the views, the Bishop of our church, in advocating then will, it is to be feared, find, that he has to contend wit the strongest of all opponents, honest, and, therefor obstinate error, spiritual prejudice, or spiritual pric and vanity. His refuge from their misconception misrepresentations, and reproaches, must be—the hop of the approbation of his God.

11. On the subject of *popular arts of reviving rel gion*, the Bishop of our church will find it necessary bear his testimony.

respect the *solemnity of places where*, the *authority and callin of persons by whom*, and the *precise appointment even with wh words or sentences*, his name shall be called on amongst his pe ple." Ecclesias. Pol. Book v. Sec. 25.

The faithful and zealous application of the means of race; the worship of the church; the preaching of he word; catechetical instruction; preparation for the rdinance of confirmation, and the reception of it, and f the supper of the Lord; diligent visitation of the eople; family and private exercises of piety; these re the means, which, enforced by the minister, and bserved by the people, will, through God's blessing, rosper his labours to their conversion and edification, nd the final salvation of their souls. But there may e times of more than ordinary attention in a congrega- on to spiritual objects. Some dispensation of Provi- ence may arouse the thoughtless and secure; and the nner, who has long resisted the monitions of conscience nd the strivings of God's spirit, may at length yield; nd, awakened and convicted, he may inquire, with eep earnestness and solicitude, concerning the things hat belong to his eternal peace. By the influence of oral causes, as well as by the blessing of God's grace, he concern may extend to others, and thus the number f those may be enlarged, who are prosecuting, with a upreme devotedness, the infinitely momentous inquiry, what shall I do to be saved. The faithful minister will herish these inquiries, and give them the proper direc- ion, by pointing the awakened and burdened spirit to he all-sufficient mercy and grace of God in Christ, ap- lied and dispensed to those who humbly and in peni- ence implore it, in private meditation, reading, and rayer, in the ministrations, the worship, and the ordi- nances of the church. And at such a season, he will dispense more frequently the public means of grace,

and, from house to house, exhort, instruct, console, and seek to store the understanding with the great principles of divine truth, as well as to excite the feelings by the pungent application of the divine threatenings. For in all excitements, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature, passion too often prostrates the judgment, and animal sensibilities usurp the place of holy affections excited and cherished by the spirit of God.

It is against these popular religious excitements, to which the term of "revivals of religion" is usually applied, that the Bishop of our church must, in duty to the highest interests of rational and fervent piety, bear his testimony—revivals "got up" by those popular arts that always excite the passions; and preserved and extended by a bold, and unlicensed, and constant employment of every mean by which animal sensibility may be roused, and the sympathies of our nature made to catch the false fires of enthusiasm. The Lord, indeed, rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm, and in religion, as in nature, ultimately overrules them for good. But evils, sad evils are they; bearing devastation and desolation in their course—in the spiritual world, sweeping before them the courtesies of society, the affections of domestic life, the fair forms of rational and sober piety, and leaving, at last, the waste of disorder, misrule, and fanaticism, where the human passions riot, over which the friends of genuine religion mourn, and the scoffer raises the laugh of scorn. Surely, in firmly opposing these popular revivals of religion, the Bishop of our church will deserve the approbation of the wise and the good—certainly he will be approved by his God.

12. In his endeavours for the general advancement of religion, he will *use only the instrumentality of his own church.*

It would seem impossible, on principle, to do otherwise. For what authority is there for propagating the Gospel, but that which the church, as constituted by her divine Head and his apostles, received? And what doctrine and sacraments, and what discipline and worship do the Bishop and Priest of our church solemnly promise to propagate, but those which their church has received, as agreeable to the commandment of the Lord? These, and these only, are the means which he is to use, whereby God's holy name may be glorified, and his blessed kingdom enlarged. The Bishop or Priest of our church is not to do evil that good may come. He is not to sacrifice principle or consistency, because thus he thinks he may save the souls of men, or draw together a crowded congregation, and numerous followers. This is no evidence of his fidelity to his church. This is an impious distrust of Providence, a presumptuous interference with the divine plans. On solemn deliberation, the Bishop and Priest of our church have come to the holy purpose of endeavouring to promote the glory of God and the salvation of man, in the mode which that church has received and appointed as agreeable to the divine command. He has solemnly, most solemnly, vowed to do so. Principle, consistency, honour, add their voice in enforcing adherence to a vow recorded in Heaven, and, at the great day, to be brought forth. That vow forbids his union with other denominations of christians, in associations, however

numerous, respectable, exemplary, and pious, which may endanger the principles and the institutions of his own church. He wishes to live in harmony and in peace with all his fellow christians. It is his duty and object, also, to preserve the principles and institutions of his own church. And, therefore, he dreads collisions and avoids associations, which may put to hazard the one or the other. His duty plainly is, to endeavour to spread his own church, as best calculated to advance the salvation of mankind. The purity of her principles, the preservation of her institutions, and not solely the increase of her numbers, are the objects of his solicitude; and therefore, however confined may be his labours, however partial his success, however limited his worldly popularity, he can lift up his soul in the humble hope that he will be approved by his God.

13. For then he will have done his part towards advancing what is dearest to his heart—a *substantial and fervent piety.*

Not a piety heated by those fires which fanaticism has kindled, cherished by those arts that appeal to the animal passions and sensibilities of our nature; a piety therefore, which, not seated in the judgment and affections, will not endure through the conflicts of the season of trial; which exhibits the varying and transient glare of an inflamed devotion, but not the steady lustre of the meek graces of the divine Spirit; which, with the glory of God in its mouth, wields often the two edged sword of human passions in its hands; which, superabounding

n professions of love and zeal for God, displays little of ustice, of candour, of charity to man; and alarmed at the nost innocent recreations of the world, shuns not those rtifices which even that world loathes and reprobates. Not this spurious piety; but a piety excited in the sanc- uary of the church, in the use of its hallowed forms, of ts divinely appointed means of grace; a piety, which, ringing to its aid all the suggestions of reason, all the aws of conscience, all the virtuous feelings of nature, elies supremely on succour from on high; which, quick- ned and cherished by the divine Spirit, shines forth onstantly in "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever hings are just, whatsoever things are honest, whatso- ver things are lovely and of good report;" and disdain- ng the grimace of ostentation, and the cant of sanctity, evidences, by its heavenly tempers, and its heavenly vorks, that Heaven is its origin, as Heaven is to be its inal and blessed abode. It is not difficult, by practices ashioned to the character and passions of our nature, to roduce the former spurious exhibition of religion; but his heaven-born piety, of no earthly origin, disdains to e nurtured by earthly arts, and rarely, but splendidly, ewards the ministrations of him who employs no other neans of winning her celestial presence but those which is divine Master has appointed and will approve.

Study to show thyself approved unto God.

In illustrating the application of this paramount prin- iple of action in the Bishop of our church, have I tra- versed too large a field, and occupied too much of your time? Or, have I touched on topics at which timidity

startles, and at which even prudence is alarmed? But the crisis, at which our church is arrived, requires, in my honest judgment, plain speaking, as it demands straight forward, intrepid, decisive action. Gladly would I have shunned a station on this occasion, which I clearly foresaw I could not occupy without remarks which could not be more painful for any to hear than for me to utter. But my right reverend father, whose suggestions I would always wish to make a law, urged; my reverend friend, I thought, would be gratified; the duty, thus presented, the church appeared to demand of me. In discharging it, I hope I have not injured her interests nor sullied her honour; I trust I have not provoked, fathers, brethren, people, your censure. There is one who knows that I have sought to approve myself to him.

I speak with the confidence of long, and intimate, and deep observation; I speak the language of inflexible truth, and not the partial accents of affection, when I pronounce of the reverend person who, at this time, is presented for the episcopate, that in no individual has a single view to the dictates of duty, to the approbation of his God, more predominating influence than in him. My friend, soon to be my brother, by the most exalted of ties, very many are the evidences which I have enjoyed of the kindness of your heart, of the tenderness of your feelings, of the disinterested purity of your motives, of the elevation of your views. This is not the time, this is not the place, for you to hear, or for me to utter, any language but that of truth. And the plainness, which I have thought duty has re-

uired me hitherto in this address to practise, I must ollow even to the end. You have been much miscon- eived, and I fear more misrepresented. And yet what stronger evidence could you afford of the purity nd singleness of your intentions, than your leaving a iocese, as yet peaceful, where influence and reputa- ion, won by your talents, your pious fidelity, and zeal, ccompanied you, to take the irrevocable step that eats you, alas! must it be so, in the midst of turmoil, of distracted Zion. You are not greeted with the ac- lamations of a united church; you are not hailed with he unanimous plaudits of an affectionate brethren and eople. The appalling period that witnesses your as- umption of the heaviest responsibility that mortal ean ssume, is that chosen to array against you some, whose luty it will be to obey you in the Lord. Be it so, my rother, if it be God's will. Study to show thyself ap- proved unto him, and you need not fear "though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof rage and swell, and the mountains roar at the tempest of the same." One that sitteth on high is mightier.

And yet the circumstances under which you now ap- pear, are, in many respects, most honourable and grati- fying. What glory surrounds the men, who, in the primitive times of the church, refused not the mitre, though it was set with thorns, and shunned not the episcopal throne, though the passage was short and inevitable from it to the cross of martyrdom. And it would seem that to a martyrdom more severe than that of the body, to the martyrdom where character, feeling,

motive suffer, you are called. One, also,* whose long protracted and revered years, whose pure and heavenly character, whose meek, and lowly, and beneficent virtues excited nought but love; one, whose eminent patriarchal services have done so much for the church that he has for more than half a century cherished; whose piety is as pure as it is lovely and engaging; he has not disarmed that rage of faction which has stretched ever him on the rack of moral martyrdom. What an honour to suffer thus associated; what a privilege to enjoy his confidence, his affection, and his counsel. In this respect, enviably distinguished will you be, my brother.

And I see hastening to rally around you, in the holy course of your duty, a body of Clergy, whose talents, learning, and primitive piety and zeal, adorn and exalt that church, to whose interests they have been, through so many difficulties and trials, inflexibly devoted, and whose honour and purity they have so ably and nobly defended. I see hastening to join their ranks a body of Laity, high-minded, talented, pure, intrepid, whose support confers honour, while it pledges, with God's blessing, success; and who, in the hour of their church's need, have devoted to her their talents, their time, their influence, their fortune; and, uniting with her clergy, have as yet saved her. Surrounded by a band, in character, principle, intrepidity, zeal, not unworthy of the primitive times of martyrs and confessors, go on, my brother, in the noblest of all causes, God and his church. God will be with you, approve, and bless you.

* The venerable Bishop White, of Pennsylvania.

And yet it would be treachery to that cause, not to look forward to the dangers that threaten it. There may come a time, when the prophetic censure will apply to those who cry "peace, peace, when there is no peace." There may come a time, when non-resistance would be the triumph of error, and the downfall of the church; and, with it, the best hopes, of pure, sound, and primitive christianity. There may come a time, when the enemy is not only at the gate of the citadel, but has gained its walls; and when it will be the sad duty of the watchmen who guard them, to sound the alarm—The cause of the Lord and of his truth, against the mighty—and when all orders of men in our Zion must harness themselves for the battle. Yet the weapons will not be carnal, nor guided by human passion. God forbid. They will be those of the spiritual powers which he has vested in his church, of the constitution, and of the laws; and they will be exerted in his fear. If these fail, then comes the awful but imperious resolve, to preserve, *at all hazards*, the precious deposit of primitive faith, order, and worship, entrusted to our church. Should such a time come—God, in his mercy, avert it—in the diocese where I now speak; should it come before that venerable head has descended to the grave, full of honour and affection as it is of years, who can doubt that it will lift itself in the lustre of meekness but with the commanding aspect of inflexible resolve. And of him whom I shall soon greet as my brother in the episcopacy, I will predict, that he will not prove himself unworthy of so meek, but unappalled a leader.

The scenes which have been witnessed in this diocese,

well might we wish that they should forever pass from memory. But duty to God, to his truth, and to his church, forbid. I would indelibly engrave them, and raise aloft the record, an awful beacon, to mark the region of wild uproar and of storms; to warn the friends of genuine piety against those who, in her fairest garb and with her highest professions, employ arts that dishonour her sacred name; to admonish churchmen to the latest generations to shun those principles and practices which will inevitably distract, disgrace, degrade their church, and, but that she is founded on the rock of ages, ruin her.

Yes, could I send my voice into every part of our Zion, I would send with it the holy watchword—The Church in her faith, her ministry, her order, her worship, in all her great distinctive principles—Maintain her at all hazards. For amidst the agitations and tumults of error and enthusiasm, she is the asylum of the wise and the good; amidst the conflicts of heresy and schism she is the safeguard of the truth as it is in Jesus, of all that he and his apostles ordained to advance the salvation of a lost world. Almighty God, give to us all, the wisdom and the grace to do our duty in the trials and exigencies to which thy church may be called, and thus to approve ourselves to thee, for the sake of him who loved that church and gave himself for it, and now lives to intercede for and to bless it, Christ Jesus the Lord.